HISTORICAL PAGEANT



PRESTON GILD 1922


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HISTORICAL PAGEANT
PRESTON GILD, 1922



THE HOLY FAMILY

PRESTON GILD 1922

HISTORICAL PAGEANT

A. J. BERRY, M.A. (OXON.)
MASTER OF THE PAGEANT

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FOREWORD

The Historical Pageant of 1922 was an entirely new venture in the successive celebrations of the Preston Gild Merchant. This Pageant possessed also entirely new features in the history of pageantry, seeing that its staging was undertaken by school children, and that all the children of the town above a certain age, rich or poor, gifted or of less than average ability, were allowed to share in its production.

The magnitude of the undertaking was obvious to the least observant among the spectators, what was known to the relatively few was the marvellous enthusiasm which animated the machinery and rendered the production on such a large scale possible.

From first to last there was the determination on the part of the active organisers of the Pageant to ensure in the most unmistakable manner that the principles on which the Gild was founded and flourished should be exhibited in their fullest splendour, that the gospel of communal interest and individual self-sacrifice should be proclaimed in no uncertain tones. Sectarian divisions were forgotten, the cleavages between the various grades of schools were bridged over, petty jealousies were submerged in the desire for the general good. Individuals without one thought of personal aggrandisement gave freely of their time and skill (and what a wealth of skill was forthcoming as

opportunities were afforded for its exercise!). Indeed it would be difficult to conceive a more capable and more united body than that called into being by the production of the Pageant, and among the many causes for thankfulness and pride must be placed in the forefront the harmony actuating the workers, the *fons et origo* of the series of glorious spectacular effects whose impressions and memories will linger even when those who created them have passed to the Great Beyond.

If, however, the Pageant was fortunate in the devotion of those who guided its destinies, it was particularly unfortunate in the bad weather that attended its time of preparation. Right up to the very week of the performances, rain retarded progress and spoiled rehearsals. The fine weather of Gild Week atoned in some measure, and previous misfortunes might have been forgotten had it not meant that they have prevented the presentation of a complete official record of the various scenes. As the only alternative, views have been collected from various sources, and grateful acknowledgments are tendered to the proprietors of "The Preston Guardian," the Central News Agency, Panora, Ltd., Mr. Arthur Winter, Mr. Sandham, Mr. Ball, and Mr. Shaw for permission to use the views they had taken. But the record even then would have been far from complete had it not been for the good offices of Mr. Carter, whose valuable contributions to this book will appear on many sides.



A. J. Berry, M.A. (Oxon),
Master of the Pageant

AS OTHERS SAW US

Whatever may be the general opinion among Prestonians themselves, there is no question that visitors from outside the town considered the Pageant the outstanding spectacular event of Gild Week, or as the "Blackburn Weekly Telegraph" expressed it, "the crowning glory of the Gild." The dress rehearsals in the week preceding the Gild had given the press photographers some conception of the magnitude and the splendour of the forthcoming performances, and they freely expressed themselves to the effect that "the unsurpassable had been attained." Nor were these representatives without a suitable standard on which to base their judgment and found their opinions. They had come straight from the Harlech Pageant which had as its setting and suggestion all the romance attaching to its Historical Castle. Yet these pressmen were lost for superlatives to express their wonder. The fame of the Preston Pageant noised abroad at the time of its rehearsals grew with each day's performance and culminated on the third day, with the gathering of a crowd of spectators estimated at over 60,000.

In what consisted the triumph that will ever be remembered by those who had the privilege of witnessing it?

Different answers would be given by different observers, according to their temperament and predilections. The reporter of the "Manchester Guardian," speaking of it as "a fine achievement in pageantry," continued: "One is tempted to say careless of historical record and of popular consent that to-day's Pageant of the Preston Gild Merchant is the finest piece of work Preston has ever done in its history of Gild weeks. On what its success depends one could scarcely say, except that with no apparent logic the Pageant suggests, and in parts very keenly, the forces of natural symbolism and dramatic beauty, implicit each in the other, and lifting the play into that medium in which one recognises at least the elements of high art."

This indeed goes to the heart of the matter. The basis of the Pageant, though not entirely Biblical, like the mediæval Mistery Play, was religious in its character. It rested on three great pillars, veneration of the past, self-negation in the present, and inspiration for the future. One observer remarked that the spectators of the Pageant had attended Church whether they willed it or not. Another, that at the time of its composition the Author must have been in the frame of mind which inspired Handel for the writing of the Hallelujah Chorus. With religion at its base, the Pageant touched in many of the spectators the deepest emotions of which the human heart is capable. There are those now advanced in life who will carry with them to their dying day memories of the "Adoration of the Shepherds" and "the appearance of the Angels," when the assembled multitude refrained from their usual clapping of hands. Many individuals, particularly among the men, were moved to tears when the sun, which had hitherto been hidden, burst forth to bestow on the prismatic robes of the Angels their full beauty, as these heavenly messengers appeared on the hill side. Few listened unmoved to the chorus of children's

voices singing "Evening Prayer" to the music of Gounod's "Ave Maria," Sterndale Bennett's "Dawn Gentle Flower," or the simple tune of the Rush-bearing hymn. The special representative of the "Liverpool Post" wrote: "Woven into the story of the early episodes was a mystical meaning. Colour and form were used through the chorus to symbolise the spiritual side of experience, and to strengthen the moral significance of a spectacle that had, even in its drama, a definitely religious appeal."

But if the religious note played a dominant part, there were others which harmonised with it.

The site selected for the performance made a very direct appeal to the æsthetic sense. Avenham Park is admittedly one of the most beautiful natural amphitheatres in England, and the slopes which rise to the height where the Belvedere is perched lent themselves to the massing of thousands of children to form the General and Narrative Choruses. The trees and bushes at the sides provided natural stage wings, the roads and terraces gave opportunities for displays of marching troops and ceremonial processions. Out of sight on the "Top Walks" and on the "Cannon Row Terrace," facilities offered themselves for the preliminary gathering of the performers, so that through the arches of the trees, the grey stone of the "Top Walks" now and again suddenly flowered magically into figures of scarlet, purple and yellow. Taken altogether the performers played their parts in a wonderfully compact and beautiful open-air theatre such as could not have been improved upon by art. The artistic features of the site were further enhanced by the contribution of colour provided by the trees, which began to dress themselves in the first tints of autumn, but these robes paled before those of the performers. The chorus children to the number of 5,000 placed on the slope above the level where the actors took their stations, made patches of scarlet, white, and blue,

resembling the gardens of country cottagers. The serial splendours of the Pageant appeared like an enormous stained glass window put together and taken apart before the eyes of the onlookers.

The "Daily Mail" correspondent wrote: "The Pageant represents scores of hours of patient, loving work on dresses by mothers at home, besides thousands of pounds spent. But it is worth all of it." The same report described it as the most beautiful and artistic feature Gild Week had produced. Mr. Joseph A. Parks, a Boston (U.S.A.) Attorney, said: "This alone is worth crossing the Atlantic to see. Gorgeous! Wonderful! The whole of the United States has never produced anything like it." The "Daily Dispatch" referred to the prevalence of colour of every hue and tint, deep red, soft tangerines, pale blue and pink, helio and purple, green and gold, shimmering silver everywhere. "The Manchester Guardian" said: "The colour of the costumes made at home was a surprising thing. Their richness of colour, a thing we thought England and the north had forgotten entirely, or at least had learned to do without, was a matter of wonder and a reminder that we who sat looking on were a very dull crowd. The more we looked at blue more royal than royalty, and orange more warm and more smoothly shining than gold, at sheepskin cloaks and rough silver brooches, the more apparent it became."

The Historical Pageant opened with the formation of the "silver" star. It closed with the enunciation of the "golden" principles of beneficence and brotherly love. Between this silver and gold appeared every blend of colour. The Empire tableaux comprised a series of enormous coloured pictures which the "Yorkshire Post" described as "a magnificent spectacle that stirred the heart."

But the Pageant made a further strong appeal in that the scenes were undertaken by children. True there were

some who before the rehearsals held the view that a "kids' show," as they called it, could be of no account. But these forgot to reckon with the happy unself-consciousness, the imagination, energy, zest, and real sense of humour which many children possess. The event proved the Pageant to be the children's triumph. More seriously-minded people realised that the children were both teachers and taught. The Bishop of Edinburgh (Dr. Walpole), in a sermon at the Parish Church, said largeness of mind could only spring out of thought, and it was a fine thing that the children should have been able to play such a magnificent part in the Gild. It showed a real purpose and proved that the Pageant was not merely cold instruction, but an expression of great ideals.

Mysticism, the spirit of religion, the artistic setting, childish spontaneity, enthusiasm and innocence do not exhaust the whole of the appeals which the Pageant made to the spectators. There were those who found in the historical framework some basis for local pride. Others again were impressed by the "pomp and circumstance" which necessarily go to make pageantry. Many also were impressed by the ambitious musical programme for juveniles, and still more wondered at the remarkable organisation which could assemble and draw away such large masses of children with the utmost regularity and precision. To take these considerations in detail, Prestonians are not unnaturally proud of their town's historic past, and this past presented in vivid panoramic form, even when details have been introduced for dramatic effect, expressed history as the Bishop of Edinburgh said: "In ever memorable pictures that would never fade away." America, which realises its immeasurable loss in the absence of a national "historic sense," is ever anxious to create such, in the organisation of frequent pageants so that the lessons

of the past may produce blossoms in the present and yield fruit in the future.

The "Yorkshire Post" opened its account of the Pageant with the words: "To most of us there is something specially appealing in a Pageant of local history, provided of course that it is well done. We see all around us the founts of the ideas and labour of past generations, and then idealised before our eyes we get glimpses of the steps taken by the city's forebears to lead up to the present position in scenes enacted by those upon whom the burden of carrying on the town's work and tradition has fallen or will shortly fall. A Pageant, for these reasons, has a more convincing air of verisimilitude than other forms of dramatic representation, even though in its conception and acting it may be only the merest nodding acquaintance with realism." The writer goes on to make it clear that he did not intend to convey the impression that the conception or the acting failed to please him. He says: "It is difficult to avoid superlatives in speaking of the gorgeous spectacle," and again "The acting has been exceedingly good." Yet again "It was a magnificent spectacle that stirred the heart. I do not wonder that Preston has demanded it shall be repeated." The representative of the "Liverpool Post" wrote: "Preston's Pageant will certainly make Pageant history in England. It gives in the first place an unusually spirited and dramatic pictorial presentation of the history of the town."

Closely allied with the pride of the townsmen in their local history is the desire to encourage native craftsmen to the exclusion of "foreigners," and to extol that sturdy independence which has ever been the distinction of the North Country. The "Daily Mail" remarked: "Some of the bowmen and monks were pronouncedly Lancashire in speech, but that was right enough." Again the "Manchester Guardian": "One discovers how that assertive independ-

ence that seems to go so well with the North Country accent, boiled up again and again in proud Preston. Early in the history we saw an ordinary citizen putting a straight question to grim Roger of Poitou, 'Shall we obtain a charter'? he demanded in exactly the tone of an alderman who in the second day's Pageant resented the forfeiture of the religious houses by the King. The townsmen joined in more of the same talk, and told Lord Derby how good a customer the King was 'when they're giving things away for nowt.' In looking back at her history, now Preston has a hundred good things to consider, but none of them perhaps better than the independence which persisting from the idyllic days when it was not necessary, in turn angered Roger and Earl Derby and produced to-day a Pageant made within its walls and acted by its own children."

Judged from the strictly Pageant standpoint the effort in Avenham Park won volumes of praise. The "Universe" wrote: "By common consent the three days' Pageant—in which the actors were some 11,000 children—in the fine natural amphitheatre of Avenham Park, has been set down as one of the most gorgeous and inspiring displays of the kind that has ever been witnessed in this or any other part of the country."

The "Daily Dispatch" reporter wrote: "It was a masterpiece of pageantry and a triumph for the chorus and others who were the active participants." Prestonians who have crossed thousands of miles of water say they have never seen anything like it. Even Americans have remarked: "It beats all our parades over yonder." "The Lancashire Daily Post" described it as "an unparalleled event in the way of dramatic achievement by juveniles." "The Preston Herald" recorded that "a military man who had a unique experience of tournaments metaphorically saluted the Pageant in recognition of its spectacular superiority." A

member of the crew of the "Renown" gave it as his opinion that the Preston Pageant surpassed everything he had seen in his trip round the world with the Prince of Wales. "The Daily Mail," under the description of a wonder Pageant, gave tribute in the words: "From the moment when 5,000 fresh young voices began 'Ave Maria,' sending a thrill of emotion through the 30,000 spectators, on through the Saxon village scene with fishermen carrying home real salmon, hunters strings of rabbits, busy boatmakers and threshers, a falconer, a blazing fire boiling a primitive kettle, villagers in rough spun dresses, and lords and ladies in gold and blue; on through the swoop down of the Vikings whirling battle axes and flourishing swords about their coloured shields—how they yelled and ran, and how the Saxons screamed—to the coming of the Scots with red hair and kilts and ferocious gesture, the pictures excelled in gaiety, colour and spontaneity, anything one remembers."

To many the range of music, "the most subtle spiritual agency in Nature," made the strongest appeal. "The Manchester Guardian" placed on record that the Pageant had not made a spring at simple profusion by piling choir on choir and brass on brass. "The choir is one, and though it holds 5,000 children, sings with one voice."

Finally the organisation which produced the clock-work precision of the rhythmic chorus, and indeed of all the participants, could not fail to attract its own section of admirers. The Gild Mayor in his expressions of appreciation to the Town Council, stated that the children represented the perfection of discipline and organisation. "The Liverpool Post" stated it was obvious that "among the organisers of the Preston Pageant there are people of genius." "The Preston Herald" stated that the work of the teachers had been remarkable for the organising skill exhibited, while the editor of "The Lancashire Daily Post" thus summed up the general position: "By common consent

the Pageant is a triumph of organisation, and behind its production there has been an amount of labour that cannot be measured. It is probably the most ambitious effort of the kind ever attempted in this country, and Preston may justly be proud of the fact that it is an altogether home-made article—that in its Director of Education (Mr. A. J. Berry, M.A.), the composer and master of the Pageant, it has an author of such distinction, and that in its schools it has children capable under the guidance of the teachers of presenting with such consummate skill and artistry a work of marvellous beauty."



THE "PAGEANT SITE" IN DAYS OF YORE.

This view, dating back to the middle of the 19th century, shows the site occupied by a farm house and a station from which "power" was obtained for the trams running between the terminus of the Leeds and Liverpool canal on the one hand and the Lancaster canal on the other.

AN OLD VIEW OF AVENHAM PARK

Showing the Whitsuntide celebration of 1860. As the photographer's sensitive plates of those days needed a long interval for exposure, some of the tracks left by the people who moved during the interval can be traced.









VIEW OF THE CROWD ON THE THIRD DAY.

This record shows the section of the crowd which stretched between the river near the North Union Bridge and the stand occupied by Dick Kerr's Band.

THE HERALDS.

These were scholars of Grimshaw Street School (Head Master, Mr. W. Clitheroe), and were the companions of the Master of the Pageant during his recital of the Prologues.

THE STAR.

This was formed by children in white robes ornamented with silver. The emblem has a two-fold significance, one historical, in that it refers to Preston's origin—the grant to St. Wilfrid of the site on which the town stands; the other sacred, indicating the clear light of religion free from materialism.

ONE OF THE POINTS OF THE STAR.

These were ten in number, five pointing outwards and five directed towards the centre. The children were drawn from St. Ignatius's Girls' School under the direction of Mother Ursula.









ST. WILFRID ASKS FOR A VOLUNTEER.

The author of the Pageant here claims dramatic licence and assumes that St. Wilfrid having acquired "temporal" responsibilities for the lands on the banks of the Ribble, is mindful of his "spiritual" responsibilities.

LICTORS WHO ACCOMPANIED ST. WILFRID.

The entrance of St. Wilfrid attended by his diminutive acolytes and stalwart lictors was an impressive sight, the contrast in colour between the black robes of the monks and the shining raiment of the lictors being toned by the delicate shades of the acolytes' cloaks.

THE OLD BRIDGE OVER THE HODDER.

This marks the point where the counties of Lancashire and Yorkshire meet on what, no doubt, was the usual road between Ripon and Preston.

ANOTHER VIEW OF THE BRIDGE.

Bridges were often built where rivers had been previously forded, and though the date of the bridge is a matter of dispute, it is usually associated with the crossing of Oliver Cromwell on his way to the Battle of Preston.









FORMATION OF THE WORD "PAX."

It is a particularly happy circumstance that Preston, whose position gives it exceptional opportunities for trade and whose life blood is therefore ever peace, should in its earliest record be associated with St. Wilfrid, "the wisher for peace."

ST. WILFRID AND HIS ATTENDANTS.

The banner which embodies the arms of the See of Ripon is noteworthy, inasmuch as the Lamb in the upper portion may have suggested the Preston "coat of arms." This scene was staged by St. Ignatius's Boys' School.

THE PRIMITIVE SAXONS.

This composite group of hunters, fishers, and tillers of the soil look as though some had come from Fulwood Forest. They were supplied by St. Ignatius's Boys' School under the direction of Mr. Hosker, assisted by Mr. Frank Pyke.

THE FALCONERS.

These suggest the times when the settlers on the banks of the Ribble depended on the river marshes for an appreciable part of their food.









THE BOATBUILDERS.

These suggest the days when transport by land was impracticable because of the absence of roads, when men therefore had recourse to the use of water-ways. Then perforce the Ribble served the purpose the road and railway serve to-day.

THE POTTERS.

These tell of one of Preston's sources of natural wealth. Food, clothing and shelter are man's elemental needs. Preston, like London, had at hand abundance of clay, and this served to make rough walls in the form of "wattle and daub" and to provide rough cooking utensils.

THE PLOUGHMEN.

These recall the times of three-field cultivation, when men held lands in common, and cultivated in rotation crops of wheat and barley, leaving the third field fallow for a year; when the possession of a plough with iron shares was the lot of a few only.

THE BLACKSMITH.

Iron was such a valuable commodity that the occupation of the smith was a highly important one, and possibly the number of "Smiths" to-day tell of the desire to be numbered among such honourable craftsmen.









ARRIVAL OF ST. WILFRID'S MESSENGER.

The settlers crowd in curiosity to hear the message of salvation, and are prevailed upon to undertake the building of a church. Old and young display their interest. The actors in this scene were drawn from St. Ignatius's Boys' School.

TABLEAU AT THE CLOSE OF EPISODE I.

The green in the foreground leading up to the white and silver in the rear was intended to symbolise the progress of the settlers from Nature to Nature's God.

THE ONSLAUGHT OF THE DANES.

This episode was undertaken by the children of the Deepdale Council School under the direction of Mr. Ward and Mr. Parkinson. Though without historical warrant, the writer for dramatic effect assumed that during the delivery of tithes by the townsmen, the Danes swooped down, robbed the priest of his just dues, and took his life.

THE BURIAL OF THE MASSACRED PRIEST.

Merchant Gilds had their roots in Religious Gilds, one of whose most important duties was to fulfil the promise of decent burial. The lack of historical warrant for the massacre of the priest was forgotten during the beautiful singing :

The dead are like the stars by day
Withdrawn from mortal eye,
Yet holding unperceiv'd their way
Through the unclouded sky.









GROUP OF DANES.

This view of a section of the Danes gives a good representation of their equipment; the shields, spears, and battle-axes made at the Maitland Street Woodwork Centre under the direction of Mr. Rutter, and the helmets and armour made at the school by the children under the direction of Miss Bond Wood.

THE RHYTHMIC CHORUS

During the singing of the Ode to Joy. The germs of the Merchant Gild, springing from the situation created by the Danish invasions, suggested the Ode to Joy, whose sentiments were admirably interpreted in gesture by the Rhythmic Chorus trained under the leadership of Miss McCourty and composed of girls from St. Saviour's, St. Austin's, St. James's, St. Mary's C.E., and St. Matthew's Schools.

THE PRESTON TOWNSFOLK

Receiving news of the Battle of Hastings. One of the most dramatic turns of fortune in English history was Harold's defeat at the Battle of Hastings immediately following his triumph over Tostig at Stamford Bridge. The dejection of the people is here well portrayed.

THE ACTORS OF THE PREVIOUS SCENE,

Undertaken by the children of Roebuck Street Council School, under the direction of Mr. Shaw and Mr. Haydock. This view shows how the parents of the scholars here as elsewhere succeeded in making suitable costumes.









TOWNSMEN IN NORMAN TIMES (Group 1).

We may believe that the social changes consequent upon the Norman Conquest, which specially affected the South of England, had little effect upon what is now known as Lancashire.

TOWNSMEN IN NORMAN TIMES (Group 2).

The groups of townsmen were drawn from the Eldon Street Council School under the direction of Mr. Helme and Mrs. Plumb. They mark the stage when the early religious Gilds acquired a commercial bias.

THE BODYGUARD OF ROGER DE POITOU.

The military bearing of these "young ladies" was sufficiently pronounced to suggest chivalrous knights. They belonged to Eldon Street School.

MEETING OF ROGER DE POITOU

And the "leading townsman" of Preston. Roger is willing to compound his "feudal" dues for a fixed sum, but he finds the leading townsman of Preston a hard-headed north countrymen.









ARCHERS AT THE BUTTS.

This scene was undertaken by scholars of St. Ignatius's Central School under the direction of Mr. Taylor. In early times, before the days of professional soldiers, special provision had to be made for ordinary townsmen to acquire skill in martial exercises. One such provision was the obligation placed on each township to arrange for butts at which the men of the township could practice archery on "holidays."

PRESTON'S WELCOME TO EDWARD I.

The town officials cleansed the market place in anticipation of the royal visit, the Gildsmen brought forth their banners, the pedlars made holiday, and the minstrels, troubadours and jugglers produced their best entertainments in honour of the King.

KING EDWARD I AND HIS RETINUE.

Though the King was conveyed to the town in a litter, his reception in the Market Place was marked with much regal splendour. The male characters in this scene were supplied by the boys of St. Ignatius's Central School under the direction of Mr. J. S. Taylor.

THE LADIES OF KING EDWARD'S RETINUE

And the local archers. The latter, fired with the prospect of a military expedition against traditional foes, rallied in great numbers to the Royal banner. The archers were drawn from St. Stephen's School, under the direction of Mr. Hartley and Miss Tomlison.









THE LADIES OF EDWARD'S COURT

And the children who strewed flowers in the King's path on his departure. These were drawn from St. Ignatius's Girls' and Infants' School under the direction of Mother M. Ursula and Sister Eustace respectively.

WIVES OF THE LEADING BURGESSES

And their children who assembled in the Market Place to greet Edward I. These children were supplied by St. Ignatius's Girls' and Infants' School respectively.

THE SINGING OF "THE STORM."

One part of Bruce's answer to Edward I's expedition was a raid into England and the burning of Preston. Out of evil good came, for this apparent disaster was followed by the constructive purpose of the first Gild celebration. The destruction of the old town, which provoked the dawn of better things, is portrayed in the storm with its two main sentiments: Miserere Domine! Gloria tibi Domine! The actors in this scene were drawn from St. Andrew's Boys' and Girls' School under the direction of Mr. Houghton and Miss Hodson respectively.

THE SCOTTISH RAIDERS

Under the leadership of Bruce, are here shown side by side with the Preston citizens headed by the Mayor. The burning of the town left no permanent ill will. This scene was staged by the children of St. Andrew's School, Ashton.





WHALLEY ABBEY,

Which even in its ruins speaks of the thoroughness and skill belonging to the Gildsmen of bygone days. The Gild system, by its elimination of the evils of unfair competition, encouraged the worker to take a pride in his work.

WHALLEY ABBEY.

No professional architects were employed in these Gild days. The masters and foremen were competent to plan nobly as well as to build truly.

WHALLEY ABBEY.

Looking beyond the walls to the wealth that created them, we recall the work of the monks who developed the sheep farming on the north country moors, and thus laid the foundations of the great textile industries of Lancashire and Yorkshire.

WHALLEY ABBEY.

The falling leaves may serve to remind us of the fate of the Gild system, which served a most useful purpose in its day and generation.

> God fulfils Himself in many ways
> Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.









A GROUP OF MEDIÆVAL GILDSMEN.

The Aldermen of the Gilds, the chaplains and the rank and file can here be distinguished. The most conspicuous banner is that of the Merchant Taylors, a Gild which often included members of the Royal family.

A SECOND GROUP OF GILDSMEN.

The banner on the left is that of the Cordwainers, an outstanding Gild owing to the importance of the leather industry. The Gildsmen were supplied by the boys of the Catholic College under the direction of Father Irwin, S.J.

THE GILDSMEN AT THE FESTIVE BOARD.

The bond of good fellowship which was the main purpose of a Gild was fostered by common religious worship and gatherings at the festive board. The communal idea in the scene before us is enforced by the passing round of the loving cup.

THE ADORATION IN THE "MISTERY PLAY."

As the Angels came from the heights looking towards the "Top Walks" and the Shepherds approached from the opposite direction to pay their adoration, the picture presented was most inspiring. To add to the effect, the sun which had up to that point been obscured by the clouds, shone forth, giving full beauty to the prismatic robes, and many of the spectators were visibly moved.







Of "the Angels and Shepherds." The Gilds had stressed the value of communal work, and possibly none but a community could have produced the exquisite robes which characterised this scene, whose appropriateness for the members of the Convent of the Holy Child Jesus is obvious. The Frontispiece shows the Crib which was made by Mr. Rutter of the Maitland Street Woodwork Centre. The same friend was responsible also for the making of the "shapes" for the angels' wings and other accessories.

THE ABBOT OF WHALLEY

Leaving the Church with some of his Cistercian monks. The scenes of the Reformation Period were undertaken by the pupils of the Grammar School under the direction of the Reverend N. Trewby and Captain McNicoll.

THE ABBOT OF WHALLEY

Blessing the sick and poor. The bulk of the crowd was supplied by St. Matthew's Boys' School and St. Saviour's Girls' School under the direction of Mr. Ashton and Miss McCourty respectively.









THE TROUGH OF BOWLAND.

This remarkable view shows a section of the road running between Whalley and Lancashire, and for the purposes of the Pageant is interesting as indicating the road traversed by Abbot Paslew on his way to be tried at Lancaster.

THE GATEWAY OF BROWSHOLME HALL.

Browsholme Hall lies within the boundary of the original parish of Whalley. The painted glass of the staircase contains many coats of arms brought from Whalley Abbey.

LORD DERBY AND LORD MONTEAGLE.

The Pilgrimage of Grace brought the Earl of Derby to Preston to hold in check the malcontents of North Lancashire, and his force of 8000 men caused the insurgents to shrink from a contest.

LORD DERBY'S ARMY.

This striking spectacle was provided by the scholars of the Grammar School. Most of the properties were provided by those outside. The coats of mail were produced under the direction of Miss C. Houseman, Superintendent of the Central Costume Department. The weapons were made under the direction of Mr. C. Carter of the Orchard School, Mr. Rutter of the Maitland Street Manual Work Centre, and Mr. Smith of St. Ignatius's Central School.









THE BURGESSES' WIVES AND CHILDREN.

Provided by St. Matthew's and St. Saviour's Schools. The sacrifice made by many of the children's parents, even those of the working classes, was one of the "wonders" of the Pageant.

ANOTHER GROUP OF THE CHILDREN

From St. Matthew's and St. Saviour's. The small boys who gave the beadles such trouble greatly amused the spectators.

THE MAYOR OF PRESTON'S PROPHECY.

Shorn of its wealth at the time of the Reformation, the Preston Merchant Gild might easily have withered and disappeared. The Mayor affirms his belief that Truth must prevail and the Gild live on.

THE JESTERS' SONG.

"There's many a trouble would burst like a bubble." The music of this song, written specially for the occasion by Mr. C. F. Howard, Head Master of Emmanuel School and conductor of the General Chorus, earned special mention in the "Yorkshire Post."









THE JESTERS, LED BY MR. JAMES WORSLEY.

This merry crowd was drawn from Roper's and the Talbot Boys' Schools under the direction of Mr. Stirzaker and Mr. Crombleholme respectively. The boys played an attractive though subsidiary part, and it was this latter aspect one of them had in mind when he replied "Nowt!" to the enquiry, "What do jesters do?"

VIEW OF RED SCAR.

The transition from feudalism to commercialism was marked by changes in the style of architecture. The Elizabethan style is well illustrated by this view of Red Scar.

QUEEN ELIZABETH ON HER WAY TO CHURCH

Not only did the magnificence of this scene dazzle the eye, but the disappearance of the Queen and the Court Ladies in the Church, followed by the chanting of the unseen choir, gave ample scope to the imagination. The scene was staged by the pupils of the Park School under the direction of Miss Stoneman.

THE MAYOR OF PRESTON

Comes under the notice of Queen Elizabeth. The first of the Elizabethan scenes, staged by the pupils of the Park School, gave a most realistic conception of the magnificence of the Queen's Court and the deference showered on her by her subjects.









THE LANCASHIRE WITCHES.

Ages subsequent to the days of good Queen Bess have remarked on the beauty of Lancashire lasses in general and those of Preston in particular, and this scene won similar tributes for the Park School girls from Pressmen and others.

THE ARRIVAL OF PRESTON'S GREAT CHARTER

Associated with the visit of Roger Ascham. Though there is no historical warranty for this visit, the dramatic exigencies seized on it as a godsend. The first scene undertaken by the Park School was marked by dazzling splendour; the second scene was a triumph for the colour scheme planned by the Art Mistress, Miss Hardy.

NURSERY RHYME FOLK.

In these we trace pictures of early English life: The little Boy Blue who is exhorted to blow his horn to keep the cows from the corn, Jack and Jill as the water carriers, Bo-peep who has lost her sheep, Jack Horner with his Christmas pie, and the pretty maid on her way to milking the cows.

NURSERY RHYME FOLK.

In our northern clime vigour can be maintained only by a good supply of food and clothing. Homely references, therefore, deal with these two subjects: George Porgie with his pudding and pie, Miss Muffet with her curds and whey, the Queen of Hearts who made some tarts, and Tom Tom the piper's son. The need of sleep is suggested by Wee Willie Winkie.









NURSERY RHYME FOLK.

Other pictures of early English life are suggested by Pat-a-cake, Pat-a-cake baker's man, Ride a cock horse to Banbury Cross to see a lady on a white horse, Little Red Riding Hood, and Simple Simon going a-fishing.

NURSERY RHYME FOLK.

Here we have Baby Bunting dressed in the products of her father's hunting, Mrs. Tucker ready to give her son Tommy his supper after he has sung for it, and the Pieman whom Simple Simon met. All the Nursery Rhyme groups were supplied by Deepdale Council Infants' School under the direction of Miss Struthers.

THE MAYPOLE.

The celebration of "Merrie England" in the third day's Pageant opened with a dance round the Maypole. The children were drawn from the Deepdale Council Infant School under the direction of Miss C. Struthers and Miss G. Berry.

THE MORRIS DANCERS.

As the Nursery Rhymes suggest the life of our forefathers on the domestic side, so the old English games and dances suggest their relaxation on the village green and in the Market Squares. The Grimshaw Street children (Head Master, Mr. Clitheroe) were trained by Miss M. Peake and Miss C. Ward to give exhibitions of these old dances.









THE FAIR: "A PAGEANT WITHIN A PAGEANT."

It is difficult to give an idea of the marvellous thousand and one activities incorporated in this scene, which hit off completely both the useful and the frivolous side of the old fair. The "Fair" scenes were undertaken by the pupils of the Technical School under the direction of Mr. Moyle, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Woods, and Miss Wilding.

THE PUNCH AND JUDY SHOW.

This was one of the side shows of the Fair. The fun of the fair in its appeal to the young is here well shown. In the background can be seen the suspended glove which marked the "opening of the Fair" by the Mayor.

PRESTON'S MEDIÆVAL TRADERS.

Attention is called to the apprentices who assisted at the stalls in the "Fair." The roguish looks in their faces recall the spirit which animated the apprentices of by-gone days. The characters were drawn from Ribbleton Avenue Wesleyan School under the direction of Mr. Williams.

THE RUSH-BEARING SCENE.

The change from the atmosphere of "Vanity Fair" to that of a religious ceremony was most effective. The children advanced to the doors of the Church singing a Rush-bearing hymn. The Rush cart was drawn up outside and unloaded on to the Rush-sheet. The children belonged to the T.C. Hincksman Memorial School under the direction of Mr. Haworth and Miss Gardner, though this represents but a small part of Miss Gardner's valuable contributions to the Pageant as Dramatic Adviser.









RUSH-BEARERS CARRYING THE RUSH SHEET.

The Pageant brought in all ranks, the children of the more thriving with the children of the poor. This view shows how the poorer children acquitted themselves right well.

THE RUSH QUEEN AND HER ATTENDANTS.

We can well believe that the beauty of a "rush-bearing" caused the ceremony to survive long after its original utility had disappeared.

THE EXPONENTS OF GILD PRINCIPLES.

Before the advent of the Empire tableaux, girls from the English Martyrs' Central School, under the direction of Mother M. Hyacinth, summarised the Gild principles of charity, brotherly love and religious duty. To emphasise the preciousness of these, the girls were dressed in glittering raiment of gold and silver.

THE CROSS AS A SYMBOL OF RELIGIOUS DUTY.

This formed part of the portrayal of the moral and religious aspects of the Gild, as summarised in emblematic formations by the children, some clad in gold and some in silver.









THE TABLEAU OF ENGLAND,

Staged by the pupils of St. Mark's School under the direction of Miss Ellis. Few of the onlookers would have realised the comprehensiveness of this tableau, which included representatives of English military, naval, constitutional, industrial, athletic, and civil life, our national heroes in history and romance, and builders of the Empire.

THE DAFFODIL GIRLS OF WALES.

The characters are from Christ Church Girls' School under the direction of Miss Houseman, who was responsible also for the Central Needlework Department of the Pageant. The daffodil is really the asphodel of the Greeks, but apparently by a sort of "punning" etymology (taffydil) the daffodil has supplanted the "leek" as the emblem of Wales, to accord with the floral emblems of England and Scotland.

IRISH MINSTRELS

Around the central figure of Tom Moore and designed to represent the spirit of melody in the Emerald Isle. The tableau of Ireland was remarkable for the closeness of its characters to real life. The children were drawn from the Talbot School under the direction of Mother M. Marcella and Mr. Crombleholme.

ERIN AND IRISH LACE GIRLS.

Children of the Talbot Girls' School. This is another illustration of how even the poorest children in the Pageant were no whit behind their more fortunately placed fellows.









SCOTLAND'S MILITARY AND INDUSTRIAL LIFE

This beautiful section of the Empire Tableaux was undertaken by the children of St. Mary's C.E. School under the direction of Mr. A. Sykes. The enthusiasm shown by the St. Mary's School scholars and parents gave point to the proud claim that the Pageant was particularly the contribution to the Gild of the poorer townsmen.

SCOTCH FISHER FOLK

And representatives of the country's clans. The characters for the striking tableau of Scotland supplied by St. Mary's C.E. Girls' School under the direction of Miss Mary Brown.

THE THISTLE AND HEATHER GIRLS.

Bonny children from St. Mary's C.E. Girls' School to represent bonny Scotland. The spectacular wealth of the third day's Pageant meant that few of the onlookers could realise the care which had been taken in the presentation of the tableau details. Such a view as this will help to redress this omission.

RED INDIANS.

Representatives of the earlier inhabitants of Canada. It is difficult to penetrate the "make-up" and realise that these are boys from St. Luke's School under the direction of Mr. Brunton.









REPRESENTATIVES OF CANADIAN LIFE.

The clothing speaks of the rigours of the Canadian winter, particularly of the Far West. This scene, as well as the following, was mostly the work of St. Luke's Girls' School, directed by Miss Smith.

CANADIAN LAND GIRLS

Who were pleased to act as representatives of the products of the field. Unfortunately, no photographic record is available of the large frame which was artistically decorated with the fruits and flowers of the Land of the Maple Leaf.

TABLEAU OF THE U.S.A.

This tableau, constructed chiefly on a historical basis, incorporated the celebrities of American life. Characters were assigned to the early discoverers, Puritan Fathers, noted Presidents, and scores of others. It was presented by Moor Park Wesleyan School under the direction of Mr. Theaker and the Misses Wignall and Noble.

RED INDIANS

(With long, dark hair) at the time of the Pilgrim Fathers, together with the Boston "Tea Party"; Mohawk Indians (with feathered head-dress), the historical event which completed the estrangement between the North American Colonies and the Mother Country.









SOUTH AFRICAN FRUIT AND FLOWER GIRLS.

Preston's representatives from South Africa who came to the Gild of 1922 were not numerous, but they could not fail to be highly gratified at the skill and beauty with which their land was portrayed.

SOUTH AFRICAN FRUIT AND FLOWER GIRLS.

It is not out of place to suggest by a second group the wealth of South Africa in fruit and flowers. This tableau was provided by the Ashton Wesleyan School under the direction of Mr. Yates.

SOUTH AFRICAN PRODUCTS.

Through the good offices of the High Commissioner for South Africa, a most comprehensive exhibit of South African mineral and vegetable productions was obtained, and the loan was the more remarkable seeing that many of the specimens were worth a considerable sum.

NEW ZEALAND TABLEAU.

Here are to be seen Captain Cook and the pioneers of the early settlers. Mr. Carter has been particularly happy in his choice of a site for this group, which might even be a bit of New Zealand itself.









NEW ZEALAND TABLEAU.

It is doubtful whether New Zealand could produce a more pleasing group of children than these who attend Emmanuel School and are associated with the industrial life of the north-west of Preston.

MAORI WOMEN.

The detailed work of this tableau will bear careful examination. These children, as well as those of the preceding group, were drawn from Emmanuel Girls' School under the direction of Miss Westworth.

MAORI MEN.

The splendid make-up of these might easily deceive an onlooker as to the land of their birth. They were all boys drawn from Emmanuel School under the direction of Mr. Howard and Miss Fish.

AUSTRALIAN TABLEAU.

These representatives of the Land of the Southern Cross, whose attachment to the Mother Country is here suggested by the central figure, were drawn from St. Mary's Street Wesleyan School under the direction of Mr. H. Howarth and Miss Attwater.









AUSTRALIAN TABLEAU.

This comprised members of the aboriginal race, explorers, representatives of industries, cricketers, soldiers and sailors, and the political divisions of the Island Continent.

INDIAN TABLEAU.

The diversity of Indian races were fully represented in this tableau, which was really Eastern in its conception and suggestion. The view gives a good idea of the military bearing of the native and British troops.

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCE OF WALES

In his uniform as Colonel-in-Chief of the 35th and 36th Indian Cavalry. The Prince himself has been pleased to accept a copy of the photo. The Indian tableau was provided by St. Andrew's Boys' and Girls' Schools under the direction of Mr. Houghton and Miss Hodson respectively.

PROUD PRESTON AND OTHER PRESTONS.

A selection from the numerous Prestons of the world who came to greet Proud Preston on the Ribble and form the climax of the Pageant of 1922. The representative of Proud Preston is Miss Miller; the other "Prestons" are from St. Mary's C.E. Girls' School under the direction of Miss Brown, who from her own school provided over a score of banners for this scene.

THE UNION JACK,

The Preston Lamb, and the Lancaster Rose. Before the formation of the various tableaux of the British Empire, 3000 boys marched on the ground to make a living Union Jack. Each of the girls on the chorus bank to the number of 4000, at a given signal, raised a small flag above her head to assist in piecing together the Preston coat of arms, "the Lamb," or the Red Rose of Lancaster. Unfortunately, no photographic record was obtained of the Lamb and Rose, but the view shown herewith gives a conception of the magnitude and position of what was a wonderful production. Mr. Ashton, of St. Matthew's School, was responsible for the planning and the formation of the Union Jack. Mr. Reeves of the English Martyrs' School, and Mr. Helme of the Eldon Street Council School, were responsible for the Lamb and Rose respectively. Special mention should be made also of the plan of Mr. Reeves for seating the Chorus whereby some hundreds of pounds were saved.


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